

PARAPHRASING

- A *paraphrase* is a restatement of another person's ideas using *your own words* and *sentence structure*.
- Repeating an author's ideas in your own words shows that you understand the original idea.
- Paraphrasing is another option for quoting an author, called an "indirect quote"
- Use it to create variety in the way that you quote, which makes your writing flow better.
- Even when you paraphrase, *you must cite (give credit) to the original source*; not doing so is plagiarism.

Three Criteria for a Good Paraphrase:

1. A good paraphrase has *the same meaning as the original*
 - All main ideas are included
 - No new ideas are added
2. A good paraphrase is *different enough from the original to be considered your own writing*
 - Uses no more than a couple of words in a row from the original source, which are usually unique phrasing or content specific words that, if you changed them, would lose the intended meaning.
 - Vocabulary is approximately 95% different from the original
 - Grammar (sentence structure) are totally different from the original
3. A good paraphrase *refers directly to (or cites) the original source*
 - The author's full name is present in the introductory phrase
 - The complete title of the source is present in the introductory phrase

For example, this is a good, acceptable paraphrase:

Original: It has long been known that Cairo is the most populous city on Earth, but no one knew exactly how populous it was until last month.

Paraphrase: Although Cairo has been the world's most heavily populated city for many years, the precise population was not known until four weeks ago.

The following is an original sentence and two paraphrases of it. Do the paraphrases meet the criteria?

Original: Many of the doctors taking part in the survey on assisted suicide **doubted** whether they could decide if a patient has less than six months to live. – "The Anguish of Doctors," John Partlow, p. 17

Paraphrase 1: According to a survey on assisted suicide in "The Anguish of Doctors," many doctors **disagree** with assisted suicide because they can't know when a patient will die (Partlow 17).

Does the paraphrase meet all three criteria? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, what is the problem? _____

Paraphrase 2: In a survey on assisted suicide, many doctors were not sure they could always know whether a patient would die in six months.

Does the paraphrase meet all three criteria? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If no, what is the problem? _____

Paraphrasing Techniques

• Tell-A-Friend Method

- Focus on the meaning of the passage and find a new way to explain it
- Read the passage and then cover it up so you can't see it
- Imagine how you might explain the meaning of the passage to a friend
- Write down this explanation, then compare it to the original to see if you got the meaning right

Using the proverbs below, practice the Tell-a-Friend Method of paraphrasing.

Example: Don't cry over spilled milk.

Paraphrase: When something bad happens that you can't control, it doesn't help to get upset.

With a partner or small group, use the Tell-a-Friend Method to write a paraphrase of the proverb you are assigned.

Proverbs: *All work and no play make Jack a dull boy.*
All that glitters is not gold.
The squeaky wheel gets the oil.

Write your paraphrase here: _____

• Chunking Method

- This method works well for longer passages
- Divide the original into phrases (groups [or "chunks"] of words)
- Concentrate on explaining the meaning of each phrase/chunk in your own words
- Combine your explanations into sentences to create a paraphrase
- It is okay to rearrange these chunks into a new order in your paraphrase

*** There are examples of the chunking method and an activity to practice using the chunking method at the back of this handout. There is also an example and some explanation for paraphrasing long passages (i.e. whole paragraphs) using the chunking method.*

• Substitution Method

- 1) Substitute the most important nouns with other nouns
- 2) Substitute the most important verbs with other verbs
- 3) Rewrite the sentences with different grammar using substituted words

Example #1

Original: "Our **decisions** about how we *use* scientific **knowledge** are *influenced* by our **values** and what we *believe* is ethical." – Nancy E. Dollahite and Julie Haun, Sourcework, p. 117.

Nouns:	decisions	-- choice, conclusion, resolution, judgment
	knowledge	-- information, facts, data, education, learning, wisdom
	values	-- principles, standards, morals, ethics, ideals

Verbs:	use	-- employ, utilize, exercise, apply
	influenced	-- affect, persuade, induce, change, inspire, shape
	believe	-- consider, think, suppose, judge, trust, accept

Paraphrase: In their book Sourcework, Nancy E. Dollahite and Julie Haun argue that our morals and ethics shape the choices we make about using the wisdom gained from science (117).

Example #2

Original: "The **principle** of **autonomy** *concerns* people's **ability** to *make* **decisions** for themselves *based* on their own **thoughts**." – Nancy E. Dollahite and Julie Haun, Sourcework, p. 117.

Nouns: principle -- belief, opinion, standard
 autonomy -- independence, self-sufficiency, self-government
 ability -- aptitude, skill, capability, talent
 decisions -- choice, conclusion, resolution, judgment
 thoughts -- opinion, judgment, belief, feelings, ideas

Verbs: concerns -- relate, affect, involve, be about, have to do with
 make -- create, build, construct, craft, formulate
 based -- founded, established, built, centered

Paraphrase: The authors of Sourcework state that independence is related to the idea that people are capable of making choices and judgments according to the opinions and beliefs that they have (Dollahite and Haun 117).

Example #3

Original: There is some **disagreement** over which **wordsmith** first *substituted* "mosaic" for "melting pot" as a way of *describing* **America**, but it is undoubtedly a more apt **description**. – Anna Quindlen, "The Mosaic vs. The Myth," p. 161.

Nouns: disagreement -- discrepancy, variance, dispute, argument, discord, quarrel, conflict
 wordsmith -- writer, originator, word slinger, creator, scribbler
 America -- United States, this nation
 description -- explanation, portrayal, depiction

Verbs: substituted -- replace, alternate, exchange, switch, swap
 describing -- explain, portray, depict, illustrate, express

Paraphrase: In her essay, "The Mosaic vs. the Myth," Anna Quindlen muses that "mosaic" is a much better word to depict the cultural diversity of the United States than "melting pot," although there is some dispute regarding where, or from whom, the term originated (161).

Practicing Paraphrasing Together

Original: "It is foolish to forget where you came from, which, in the case of the United States, is almost always somewhere else." "The Mosaic vs. the Myth" by Anna Quindlen, p. 162.

Nouns:

Verbs:

Paraphrase:

Name: _____

Paraphrasing Assignment

Now You Try...

Good writing using sources includes the use of both direct quotes and indirect quotes (paraphrasing). Using the passage below (in bold), practice paraphrasing by using all three paraphrasing methods. For #1 and 2, you may choose to paraphrase just one sentence from the original quote. For #3, however, you must paraphrase the entire original quote. If you need extra space, use the back of this sheet.

ORIGINAL: What is lost due to the relationship between SAT or ACT test scores and government-provided funding for schools is teachers' freedom to use their creativity, inspiration, inquiry, and spontaneity. Instead, teachers are pressured to "teach to the test"; in other words, teachers are limited to teaching *only* the information, facts, and skills covered by standardized tests. **"Pencils, Paper, People: Stomping Out Standards," by Emi Faust**

Tell-A-Friend Method

Chunking Method—*indicate the "chunks" by highlighting/underlining them in the original (above in bold)*

Substitution Method

Important NOUNS: & Their Synonyms:

Important VERBS & their Synonyms:

YOUR PARAPHRASE: